

**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**  
**Washington, DC 20515-0909**

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September 21, 2017

The Honorable Ajit Pai  
Federal Communication Commission  
445 12<sup>th</sup> Street NW  
Washington, D.C. 20554

Received & Inspected  
OCT 11 2017  
FCC Mail Room

**Re- Emergency Broadcasting on Cellular FM Chips During Emergencies**

Dear Chairman Pai,

I urge your full and fair consideration in modifying existing rules to make it mandatory to turn on the radio chips found in cellular devices for emergency broadcasting during disaster events like hurricanes or wildfires.

As you likely know, all cellular devices are equipped with FM radio chips but cellular carriers turn them off. Given the existing technological capacity and the pre-existing infrastructure of the emergency broadcasting system, citizens should be able to receive emergency broadcast transmissions during declared emergencies—times when receiving accurate emergency information and instructions is of paramount importance. Access to such instructions may be impaired during power outages or other communicative interruptions, a person may only have their personal cellular device to receive timely and accurate information. Therefore, FM chip access is a pragmatic and low-cost solution for people to receive emergency information during crisis periods. It merits further consideration in the wake of several recent declared emergencies.

I fully acknowledge the scope concern and would suggest a narrowly tailored rule, applying only to limited situations and certain types of transmissions (i.e. for emergencies and for the emergency broadcasting transmission).

I urge your full and fair consideration to make it mandatory to turn on cellular phone radio chips for emergency broadcasting during declared disaster events. I thank you for your consideration. Please contact my office know if any additional information would be helpful.

Sincerely,



Darren Soto  
Member of Congress



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION  
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF  
THE CHAIRMAN

November 13, 2017

The Honorable Darren Soto  
U.S. House of Representatives  
1429 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Soto:

Thank you for your letter dated September 21, 2017, regarding activation of the FM radio functionality on cellphones for use during emergencies. You note that enabling this capability during emergencies would be a cost-effective way of incorporating cellphones into the existing emergency broadcasting infrastructure and increase access to critical emergency information.

Most, but not all, cellphones have an FM tuner as part of the chipset that enables Wi-Fi and Bluetooth connectivity. In some cases this functionality has not been enabled by the cellphone manufacturers. I agree with you that activating FM capability in cellphones is an important public safety issue. In fact, in my first public speech after becoming Chairman, I called on the wireless industry to activate the FM chips that are already installed in most smartphones sold in the United States, and I applauded those companies that have done so. During my recent visit to Puerto Rico to survey efforts to restore communications, I also heard frequent comments in support of enabling FM chips in cell phones. In September, noting the devastation caused by Hurricanes Harvey, Irma, and Maria, I urged Apple to activate FM chip capability in its iPhones, which it has resisted doing in contrast to other phone manufacturers. I am also pleased to note that recently Sprint and Next Radio announced that FM reception would be available on most Sprint Android and Windows phones using the Next Radio app. You may be assured that I will continue to encourage manufacturers and service providers to make FM reception available to consumers to provide cost effective access to critical information during crises.

I appreciate your interest in this matter. Please let me know if I can be of any further assistance.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Ajit V. Pai".

Ajit V. Pai